Pre-Synopsis for the Award of Ph.D. Degree

On

"EXPLORING THE CULTURE AND FOLK LITERATURE OF THE INDIGENOUS GOND TRIBE: A STUDY"

(With special reference to Nanded district in Maharashtra and Adilabad district in Telangana)

To

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Submitted

To

SWAMI RAMANAND TEERTH MARATHWADA UNIVERSITY, NANDED

Under the Supervision

Of

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INTRODUCTION:

Indigenous people are inheritors and practitioners of unique cultures, tradition and folklore. They have their own cultural, social, linguistic status and practices which are distinct from those of the dominant communities. Indigenous people have maintained their traditional knowledge and traditional resources since time immemorial. A great deal of traditional knowledge, including customary laws and folklore are destroyed by the colonizers and post – colonial people also; they imposed their own system of law, knowledge, culture, religious matters on indigenous people. However, today there is some appreciation of the values and potential of the traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples.

But indigenous people, even today, are facing many issues which need to be addressed for their overall development. There are issues of culture, health, education, economic, literary along with other political and social issues of the indigenous people. Every indigenous community has same unique problems and challenges; challenges of adjusting themselves with modern societies at the same time protection and conservation their own culture, traditions and literature. There is an urgent need to understand and study such problems of indigenous people through their culture, literature and life. It is the need of the hour to probe deep in their culture, literature and life to reach the root causes of the issues and find out remedies for the same.

Gond tribe is one of the major indigenous tribes in India. It has its uniqueness with its richness in culture, customary laws and folklore. Health, education, political and economic issues are some of the major issues that create major hindrances in their lives. And indigenous Gond tribe is far behind in these areas as compare to other communities in India. To understand these people one has to understand their language and their life through their literature. Literature of Gonds is oral literature; despite of the fact that they have Gondi language which has Dravidian script. Literature of Gonds is not largely available in written form; and whatever is available has oral form which transfers from one generation to another in oral form through their folk songs, dances and celebration of various festivals.

It is essential to study the history of Gonds to explore various things like their culture, traditions and attacks made on them to make their culture, tradition and life impure and disturbed. Actually the name ‘Gond’ is not the original name of the community. The name is given to this tribe by others. But as per the record of Government documents it is Gond. In fact

the real name of Gonds is ‘Koya’. They are also known by another name, i.e., ‘Koitur’, which is the original name of indigenous Gond tribe and is also a ‘Dravidian ethno – linguistic tribe. The civilization of Gonds is connected to the Indus Valley Civilization. The Indus Valley Civilization is 6000 years older than the Aryan invasion in India which came around 2000 B.C. the Indus Valley Civilization was none other than the aboriginal Gond civilization.

Gonds have their own rituals, culture, folk dances and songs, festivals and celebrations. Actually they are rich in all these things. But they are weak and poor in health, education, economic and political areas. Therefore the researcher will find scope to carry out research work in this area.

Who are Adivasis / Indigenous?

The term ‘adivasi’ means original inhabitants or indigenous people. The ‘adivasis’ are known by different titles like ‘Gond’, ‘ Bhill’, ‘Kolam’, ‘Pardhan’, ‘Andh’ etc. given by the nation to them. At global level; they are known as ‘indigenous people’. They are known as ‘adivasi’ in India, they are known as ‘aboriginals’ in Australia, ‘blacks’ in Africa, red Indians in America etc. The geographical isolation, distinctive culture, primitive traits, and shyness due to not being a part of so called civilized world and economic and social backwardness created a number of problems for them; even it raised question on their existence on the earth. The distinguishing nature and other features of indigenous people are due to their special relationship to their territories and the relationship between the individual, tribe and nature. Indigenous, especially Gond people are:

1) Geographical isolated from the mainstream community.
2) Rely largely on forest, ancestral land and water bodies within the territory of the tribe for food and other necessities.
3) Have a distinctive culture which is community oriented and gives priority to nature.
4) Provide, relatively, much freedom to women within the tribe.
5) Liberal without of division of labor and caste system.

Indigenous people in India:

The indigenous people are thought to be the earliest settlers and original inhabitants of the Indian peninsula. In India, generally indigenous people are known as Adivasi and constitutionally they are recorded as ‘Scheduled Tribes (S.T)’ in government records.

Statement of the Research Problem:

A Study of Indigenous Gond Tribe through their Culture, Literature and Life

Research Gap:

Some attempts are made to translate the Gondi language into other languages like Marathi, Hindi and Telugu. But they are meager and not good one to understand either the tribe or their language. There is scope for the research to be carried out extensively on the culture, literature and life of the Gond people.

Research Methodology:

This kind of study will be novel initiative to provide protection on one hand and conservation to the culture, literature and the life of the indigenous people, for it is difficult to live for any person after getting uprooted from one's own culture and traditions. Culture and traditions are essential for the emotional and natural growth of any person. This research depends on field work up to certain extant, for the researcher has to collect much data first hand from survey and sampling methods and rest of the data will be collected from various documents, government websites, museums and other sources.

Analytical research methodology will be adopted by the researcher for the study. Data collected both first hand and second hand will be analysed and inferences will be drawn from the analysis.

The researcher will consider indigenous Gond tribe, especially found in Kinwat taluka in Nanded district of Maharashtra and Adilabad district in Telengana. The researcher will focus on the culture, traditions, literature and life of the Gond tribe.

Importance of research:

Literature reflects an actual picture of society, state, nation and their past, present and future. But it is difficult to identify every community on the basis of their literature. Because of socio-cultural politics, economic issues and other such things disturb both life and literature of the people. In a border context, community is a group of people with similar interests and residing in one geographic place; whereas society is constructed upon interactions with varied

people who live in that community. An attempt will be made to understand the life, literature and culture of the Gond tribe for the better understanding of the tribe.

Objectives of the research:

Essential objectives of the research are as follows:

1) To study the life of Indigenous Gond tribe,
2) To study the folk literature of Gond tribe,
3) To study educational status of the Gond tribe,
4) To study the linguistic status of Gondi language.
5) To study the knowledge of ethnic medicine of Gonds.
6) To study economic and health status of the people in the tribe.

Hypothesis:

Proposed hypotheses of research:

1) Gond tribe is original inhabitant in the tribal areas.
2) Literature, culture and life of Indigenous Gond tribe is unique but unknown to the world.
3) Illiteracy, geographical situation, tradition, ritual, and lack of other facilities and means of communication are the causes of backwardness of life of Indigenous Gond tribe.
4) The literature of the Gond tribe is away from mainstream as it is in the form of folk literature and largely in oral form.

Scope and Limitation:

Since the tribe of Gond is found only in Kinwat taluka in Nanded district of Maharashtra and Adilabad district in Telengana, the study will be limited to the total population of these two districts. The scope of the study will be extended upto only these two districts; and especially to the Gond tribe.

Data Collection:

Since the perspective of the research will be exploratory, qualitative as well as quantitative both primary and secondary sources of data collection will be used. Interview schedule and observations will be prepared to collect primary data. Government report publications, articles, journals, books etc. will be used as secondary sources to collect data.

A) Primary data collection mode:

- Interviews
- Observations

Primary data will be collected by face to face interviews with the respondents by asking questions. There are literate and illiterate people in Gond tribe, therefore face to face interviews will play an important role. Like interview, observation is another effective method in primary data collection. Primarily observations of events will help a lot to understand many things.

B) Secondary data:

- Government policies, reports, publications etc.
- Articles, journals and books etc. will be used as a secondary source of data collection.

Chapter Scheme:

The study will be carried out in the following chapters:

1. Introduction:

The researcher will give introduction of the study. The researcher will deal with the basic concepts like 'Ingenious People', 'Adivasi', 'Tribe', 'Gond', 'Bhill', 'Culture', 'Literature', 'Folklore'' "Traditions' and so on. The researcher will use both primary and secondary data for this chapter. In this chapter the researcher will also mention in detail the research methodology. It will include the methodology, selection of research topic, objectives, hypotheses, importance of research, and selection of samples. A good review of literature will be taken for the better understanding of the study. Resources like Internet, libraries and various websites etc. will be used for taking review of the literature.

2. History of Ingenious People in India:

In this chapter the researcher will study the history of indigenous people in India. In this connection, Thundy Zacharius P. in his research paper 'Aboriginal Groups in India' says, "Economically and socially least advanced, the scheduled tribes are the earliest inhabitants of India. The English called them aborigines, and this concept was readily accepted by the average, educated Indian who traces his own ancestry to the Aryan and Dravidian invaders of the subcontinent." In this chapter the researcher will collect the data about the history of indigenous people in India through primary and secondary sources. Interview, visit, observation etc., will be used as primary source and books, government policies, reports, publications, journals will be used

as secondary source for the study. Good knowledge of history will connect a bridge between the past and the present.

3. Culture of Gond Tribe

In this chapter the researcher will study the culture of Gond tribe. In this relation, Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica say, "There is no cultural uniformity among the Gond, although the religion of all Gond peoples centres in the cult of clan and village deities, together with ancestor worship. The most developed are the Raj Gond, who once had an elaborate feudal order." In this chapter the researcher will collect the data about culture of Gond tribe through primary and secondary sources. Interview, visit, observation etc., will be used as primary source and books, government policies, reports, publications, journals will be used as secondary source. Culture is not the product of one day or one year; it is long process like evolution in nature, hence the study of culture will be pivotal part of the research, for it will give better understanding of the Gond tribe.

4. Literature of Gond Tribe

In this chapter the researcher will study the literature of the Gonds. In this connection, Nuthulapati Thirupatamma says, "Folk literature is a part and parcel of the language and culture of our society. Folk literature is studied for its intrinsic merit and for enjoyment, more as an independent literary genre. The tribal folk songs have come to us by an oral tradition. This tradition has been preserved for generations and transferred to new generations." Literature reflects society and a deep probe in literature will better understanding of the Gond tribe. In this chapter the researcher will collect the data about literature of Gond Tribe through primary and secondary sources. Interview, visit, observation etc., will be used as primary source and books, government policies, reports, publications, journals will be used as secondary source.

5. Life of Gond Tribe

In this chapter the researcher will study a brief history of life of Gond tribe. In this connection the researcher will study the history of the Gond tribe in India; and will try to analyse it by comparing history with the present status of the Gond people. The researcher will try to find out what type of life was lived by the Gonds in the past and what type of life they are living in a region called Gondwana, at present. Gondwana covers at present, regions like 'Vidarbha', some part of the states like Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Jharkhand, West Bengal and Odisha.

- The people living in Gondwana were known as Gondi people.
- The ruling class among the Gonds was called Rajgonds.
- Gondwana had four major kingdoms -
    - Garha in Jabalpur,
    - Chanda in Chandrapur,
    - Kherla in Betul, and
    - Deogarh in Nagpur.
- The Chanda kingdom, established in 807 AD, was the most significant Gond kingdom. They introduced revenue administration and focused on irrigation infrastructure.
- Gond rulers started building forts for defense, with later forts becoming more lavish.
- Rani Durgavati was a warrior queen of the Garha kingdom known for her battle against Mughal emperor Akbar.
- The Mughals briefly captured the Gond kingdoms. However, they regained their territories later.
- The weakened Gond empire was attacked and captured by the Marathas. After the British gained control, they imposed oppressive policies. They restricted access to forest resources.
- In 1910, the Gond tribe rebelled against the British government. This was popularly known as the Bastar Rebellion."

Hence the study of this tribe becomes essentially important for the present status of this tribe is not good despite of the fact that they have very long and glorious history.

6. Conclusion

The researcher will summarize the study in this chapter. It will be the concluding chapter of the study. Hypothesis will be tested in this chapter. This chapter will provide a type of direction towards fulfilling the objectives of the study. The researcher will sum up the study in this chapter and conclude the study by providing suggestions and recommendations. Further scope of the study will be a part of the same chapter which will be helpful for the aspired researcher to carry out the study further on the same or any other aspect of the same tribe or any other tribe in India or other countries.

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Acceptance Letter

To,

The Registrar,

P.G. Section,

S.R. T.M. University, Nanded

Date: 20/03/2022

Sub: Regarding acceptance to supervise the candidate for the award of Ph. D. Degree.

Respected Sir,

I accept the candidate, Ramdas Madhav Atram, allotted to me by the University as my research candidate for the award of Ph. D. Degree.

He has worked satisfactorily on the topic"A STUDY OF INDIGENOUS GOND TRIBE THROUGH THEIR CULTURE, LITERATURE AND LIFE", after much discussion on it. I will supervise this candidate for the award of doctoral degree.

Dr. Ajit M. Mulajkar